

## The HTML Tag

An HTML tag is a code element that tells the Web browser what to do with your text. Each tag will appear as letters or words between a < (less than sign) and a > (greater than sign).

*Example: <center>, <body>*

To tell the Web browser to "end" doing what you just told it to do, a forward slash is used in the closing tag:

*Example: </center>, </body>*

*Most tags come in matched "beginning" and "ending" pairs, but this is not an absolute rule.*

*Any Web page you create will contain the following tags at the start of the page:*

- ❑ <HTML>: tells the Web browser that this is the beginning of an HTML document
- ❑ <HEAD>: tells that Web browser that this is the header for the page (you'll learn later what goes between "HEAD" tags)  
</HEAD>
- ❑ <TITLE>: tells the Web browser that this is the title of the page  
</TITLE>
- ❑ <BODY>: tells the Web browser that this is the beginning of the Web page content -- everything you want to say and see on your page will follow this tag.

*The tags needed to end any Web page are:*

- ❑ </BODY>
- ❑ </HTML>

## Creating a Simple Page

There are many ways to create Web pages. Many of companies have created tools to help with the process in one way or another. Our goal here, however, is to understand how Web pages really work, rather than have a tool hide the process from us. Therefore, we will use the simplest tools possible -- the ones already on your machine.

On your machine you have a program, or application, that can create simple text files. On Windows machines, this application is called Notepad. On a Macintosh, this program is called SimpleText. If you cannot find these programs, it is also possible to use a basic word processing program, like WordPerfect or Microsoft Word.

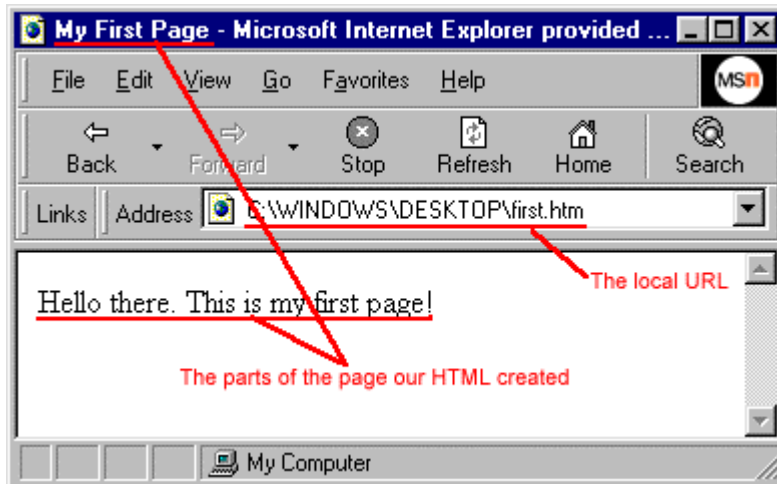
Once you have the proper program open on your screen, type (or cut-and-paste) the following HTML text into the window:

```
<html>
  <head>
    <title>My First Page</title>
  </head>
  <body>
    Hello there. This is my first page!
  </body>
</html>
```

Whether you put the tags and text side-by-side, row-by-row or indented will not make a difference in how the text is displayed in a browser window. Whether you use uppercase or lowercase letters within your tags also does not make a difference.

Now you need to save this file somewhere so that you can find it in a moment. Save it to the desktop, or, better yet, to a directory that you set up to hold all of the pages you are going to create. Save it to the filename first.html.

Next, open the page in your Web browser (e.g., Microsoft Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator). All Web browsers have a way to open a file stored on the local machine. In Internet Explorer and Netscape, select Open File from the File menu at the top of the window. Open the file first.html. When you open it in your browser, it will look something like this:



Three things are identified in this figure:

- You can see that the page has the title "My First Page."
- You can see that the page's body contains the words "Hello there. This is my first page!"
- You can see that the URL being displayed in the address window is C:\WINDOWS\DESKTOP\first.html from the local hard disk, rather than the usual http://... that a URL would contain if we were receiving the page from a server on the Internet.

By looking at the HTML text that makes up your first page, you can see exactly how the page got its title and body.

Now that you have created and viewed your first Web page, you are well on your way to becoming a Web page pro. The key to knowing everything about how a Web page works is to learn more and more of the HTML tags that let you customize your pages. You'll also want to learn about tools that can help you create tables, frames and graphics for your pages. The other articles in the Web-page series will guide you through all of the information you need.

## Basic HTML Formatting Tags

You will use the basic HTML tags on this page all the time -- they do 90% of all the formatting that you see on most web pages. Once you learn them, you are well on your way to becoming an HTML pro!

You have two ways to try them out as you are learning:

- If you liked the "first.htm" file we discussed on the previous page, you can type HTML into it and create complete web pages. Remember to place all the information you want displayed on your Web page between the <body> and </body> tags. Experiment with your page by adding new tags and checking out the results.

Let's get started!

## **Bold, Italics and Underline**

- Make any piece of text bold by adding the tag:

*<b>to the beginning of the text, and adding the closing tag:  
</b> wherever you want the bold attribute to end.  
This is <b>bold</b>.*

- To italicize, use these tags in the same manner:

*<i>.....</i>  
This is <i>italicized</i>.*

- To underline, use these tags:

*<u>.....</u>  
This is <u>underlined</u>.*

## **Breaks and Paragraphs**

Although your typed text may contain carriage returns, tabs and extra spaces, browsers will not see them. You will have to use tags in order to create blank space in your HTML documents.

*<br> creates a break between one line and another. You can use several of these tags together to create blank space.  
This line is <br> broken.*

This line is  
broken.

*<p> creates an extra space between two lines of text. If you place <br> in a line of text, it will only break the line; if you use <p>, it will both break the line and create an extra space.*

*<hr>creates a horizontal rule, or horizontal line.  
This is a horizontal rule: <hr>  
This is a horizontal rule:*

---

## **Changing Font Color, Type and Size**

- Change the color of any text by using the tags:

*<font color="color">...</font>  
This is <font color="red">red</font>.  
This is <font color="green">green</font>.*

Most standard colors will work. Also try "lights" and "darks" such as "lightblue" or "darkgreen." You can also specify a particular hexadecimal color number, such as: `<font color="#864086">`. For a list of hexadecimal color codes, visit [this page](#).

If you would like to assign a specific color to the entire text of your page, add `text="color"` within the `<body>` tag.

Example:

*<body text="blue">*

Even if you assign a color to your entire text, you can still change the color of any portion of that text by using the tags you learned above. Change the font type of any text by using the tags:

*<font face="font type"> ... </font>  
This is <font face="arial">arial</font>.  
This is <font face="comic-sans">Comic</font>.*

(Note: If the font type you specify is not available in the user's computer, the font type will default to the browser default, usually Courier or Times New Roman; so it is best to stick to standard font types if you want to be able to control what is displayed in the user's browser.)

- Change the size of any text by using the tags:

*<font size=value>...</font>*

*Example: <font size=4>*

The default font size on most browsers is "3", so any values larger than 3 will make the text larger, and any values smaller than 3 will make it smaller.

You can also change the font size by adding to or subtracting from the default font size.

End any font element change with the tag:

`</font>`

### **Creating Background Color**

Change the background color of your page by adding `bgcolor="color"` within the `<body>` tag.

Example:

```
<body bgcolor="yellow">
```

Again, as was described in the section on changing font color, you can use most standard colors, or use a Hexadecimal Color Code.

### **Linking to Other Sites**

One of the best parts about Web pages is the ability to create links to other pages on the Web. Using the following anchor tags, you can reference other people's work, point to other pages you like, etc:

```
<a href="URL">
```

Type in the title of the page after the anchor tag, and close the anchor with:

```
</a>
```

Example:

```
<a href="http://www.uensd.org"> UEN Professional  
Development </a>
```

### **Linking to Receive E-mail**

If you would like to receive e-mail from people who read your page, use the following anchor tag:

```
<a href="mailto:youremailaddress">
```

*Then type your e-mail address (or whatever link text you would like to have shown on your page) again after the tag. Close the string with:*

```
</a>
```

Example:

```
<a href="mailto:example@uen.org"> E-mail Me </a>
```

## Creating Links to Your Own Page

Anchor tags are not only used for linking to pages on the Internet. You can also use them to link to information located within your own page. In this instance, you can omit the prefix "http://www" and just include the html document file name:

Example:

```
<a href="http://www.uensd.org/page2.html"> Page 2 </a>
```

To link to a specific portion of your page, you will need to name the section you are referring to, and include that name within the link's anchor tag. Here's how:

Name any section of your page by inserting the following tag immediately before the specific section you want the link to refer back to. You can choose any word, letter or character to use as a name:

```
<a name="name">
```

Example: 

```
<a name="5">
```

In the anchor tag, you refer to this portion of your page by putting a "#" in front of the name. If the named link refers to a location within the page that contains the link, the anchor tag linking to this named portion would look like this:

```
<a href="http://www.uensd.org/#5"> Section 5 </a>
```

If the named link refers to an html document separate from the page the link is located in, include the html document file name as well.

Example:

```
<a href="http://www.uensd.org/page2.html #5"> Page 2  
section 5 </a>
```

## Adding Images and Graphics

Place any digital image on your page using the following tag:

```

```

Images on Web pages are either GIF files (pronounced "jiff") or JPG files (pronounced "jay-peg"). Any image will contain one of those extensions, so if you have an image called "logo," it will be labeled either "logo.gif" or "logo.jpg."

Be sure to store the images and graphics that you will be displaying on your Web page in the same folder or directory that you have your "html" file stored into. Otherwise, your computer will have trouble

finding the picture you want displayed. Also, be sure to type the picture name exactly how it is saved into that folder -- file names are case sensitive.

### **Justification**

By default, your text and images are left-justified when displayed in your browser, meaning that text and graphics automatically line-up on the left margin. If you want to "center" any portion of your page instead, you can use the following tag:

```
<center>  
You can end the centering with the corresponding closing tag:  
</center>
```

You can also code "divisions," anything from a word to a line of text to an entire page, to be justified a certain way.

Start your division with the division alignment tag, including the justification you wish the text or images to take on (i.e. right, left, center):

Example:

```
<div align="center">  
End the division justification alignment with the tag:  
</div>
```

With the information you have just learned in this article, you can begin to create very interesting and eye-catching Web pages. Try creating a Web page or two using the tools and tags we just discussed.